



Pre-Incident Indicators

Workplace Violence Research Institute
“Preventing Violence in the Workplace”
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Research of over 200 incidents of workplace violence revealed that in each case, the suspect exhibited multiple pre-incident indicators that included the following symptoms:

- Increased use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs
- Unexplained increase in absenteeism
- Noticeable decrease in attention to appearance and hygiene
- Depression and withdrawal
- Explosive outbursts of anger or rage without provocation
- Threatens or verbally abuses co-workers and supervisors
- Repeated comments that indicate suicidal tendencies
- Frequent, vague physical complaints
- Noticeably unstable emotional responses
- Behavior which is suspect of paranoia
- Preoccupation with previous incidents of violence
- Increased mood swings
- Has a plan to "solve all problems"
- Resistance and over-reaction to changes in procedures
- Increase of unsolicited comments about firearms and other dangerous weapons
- Empathy with individuals committing violence
- Repeated violations of company policies
- Fascination with violent and/or sexually explicit movies or publications
- Escalation of domestic problems
- Large withdrawals from or closing his/her account

During post-incident investigations, employees and co-workers in each case stated that they observed one or more of these symptoms but considered them insignificant or just "weird" behavior. Some employees feel that bringing odd behavior to the attention of their manager or supervisor constitutes a form of "ratting" or informing on their co-workers. The reality is that reporting such potentially dangerous behavior is in the best interest of all, including the offender. Only if management is aware can they take appropriate actions, including counseling for the troubled employee.

NOAA Satellite & Information Service Workplace Violence Prevention Program